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ABSTRACT

The activities described in this publication are based on a language experience approach that involves primary grade children in progressions from experience to art, writing, and reading. The first and longest section presents a model lesson plan for activities in which children fantasize about being balloons and then progress to related movement, art, and language activities. The other sections suggest activities useful in redirecting disruptive children to art and language experiences; developing show and tell sessions that involve lively, natural interactions; setting focuses for listening; building language experiences upon natural, spontaneous play; enriching communication and language through movement and art experiences; building language upon experiences with Cuisenaire rods, attribute blocks, and unit blocks; creating a classroom writing center; and helping children learn to write and to identify letters through scribbling. The publication includes anecdotes and examples of pupil/teacher dialogue to show how the activities were used in class, discussions of skills that can be developed through the activities, and suggestions to help teachers become comfortable in using the suggested techniques. (GT)

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LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

FOR KINDERGARTEN, FIRST, AND SECOND GRADE

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Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development
Level II
Date: 7/17/70
Author: Margot Biestman

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INTRODUCTION *

"Will the reading lesson be fun today?" said a child in my kindergarten, a smile stretched across her face.

"I don't know. Will it be? That's up to you and me. What will make it fun?"

"Oh, the kind where we draw."

I said OK and wrote "draw" on the board.

(I realized that she was about to describe a process -- she wanted to give herself and to give back to me what I had helped her learn. She was going to be in the process of helping to make her own lesson plan, using other children as well as me as resources. I had provided many different experiences during the year, some of which I will describe later. I had exposed them to many different concepts and ideas. They had been given several variations in each experience to help them realize what they had experienced. My lessons followed basic guidelines and stressed the same process.)

Children began to volunteer.

"No, first we have to have something to draw about."

"A story -- a story."

I asked them how to do this so every child could take part.

"Have a story that all the children can help tell. Use some words that we know."

I asked, "What words would you use?"

"Some from the word charts -- our favorite words from our envelopes."

---

* Biestman, Margot S. "My Kindergarten". To be copyrighted 1970 by Far West Labs

1. Sagan, Eugene B. , Ph.D., Sagan, Juanita B., M.A. -- "Process of Good Teaching -- Creative Behavior Process".

"OK" -- I said, "Choose three words for the story."

Three different children said, "Dragon," "girl," "bear."

I wrote those three key words for the story on the board.

I realized that some children could not read those words, some could read them, some could sound out the letters, some could try only the initial sounds. However, there would be something in the lesson that each could do.

A boy said, "I know. Let's begin by one child telling a sentence in the story, and then the next one and the next one --"

A girl piped up, "Then we'll draw a picture of the sentence we said. Then we'll write the sentence or anybody can write the words they know."

I wrote on the board -- tell, draw, write. A progression, using a process. A child made up a sentence, "A girl went in the woods to pick flowers." I wrote on the board his name -- next to it "girl". Other children added sentence after sentence, one at a time. I wrote their names on the board and their key words next to their names.

"Now let's draw our part of the story," a child said.

The children went to their seats and drew illustrations for their sentences. Some wrote their key words. Later I wrote their sentences.

"A girl went in the woods to pick flowers."

"A dragon came and tickled the girl."

"A dragon ate the girl."

"The dragon ate more people."

"Warriors came to kill the dragon."

"The dragon got dead."

"Another girl came along to the dragon. She thought he was dead."

"The dragon woke up. The girl ran."

At this point, part of the story is missing. Did the dragon have magic?

Could he come back to life again? Did the warriors think they had killed the dragon, but indeed they hadn't? To deal with the missing parts of this story, I ask the children to act out the story, and have the audience find the missing part. By acting out a story they may find the missing part themselves; or I may give clues like the questions above, so that the children may have the experience of telling a complete story with a beginning, a middle, and an end.

"A bear came out in the woods and chased the girl."

"The bear ate the girl."

"The bear ran home."

"The bear took a nap."

"While the bear was asleep, the girl climbed out of his tummy."

"The girl ran home."

"The girl picked flowers."

At this point, in acting out a story I will ask the children which sentence needs to come first, in sequence.

"The dragon and the girl got to be friends."

I will ask how they got to be friends -- how did the dragon find the girl? -- another missing part to the story.

"The dragon gave the girl a hug."

Some of the words which the children used were words on word cards which they had learned to read from previous experience and from a list of 250 commonly used words. Some wrote these words -- hug (previous action of one child hugging another), flowers (previous experience of going on a flower walk and choosing their favorite flower, and drawing an enlargement of it, then writing the word), ran (from previous action, rhyming that word with another on a rhyming "family" word list, and finding it in a sentence). I write a new and simple word on word cards for their collection (from the

"250 words most commonly used" or Dolch list) in their envelopes. The children will then read their words, some will read their sentences and some will read the whole book, individually, in small groups, to each other, or to me.

The above anecdote is an example of a progression of Language Experience. In it I have described the use of fantasy, expansion of vocabulary, verbal description, dictation, art, writing, problem solving, dramatics, and reading including both sight word and word attack approaches. This progression follows the pattern which I describe in later papers.

Experiences, concepts and ideas may be different, but the process remains the same. There is a familiar pattern in all of these lessons. (Experience → art → writing → reading). The order of the progression may be changed, but the elements remain the same. The lessons which I describe later are not just the same ones over and over again, but the process is the same. Teachers may adapt many of their own lessons which fit this pattern and progression of Language Experience. If teachers are willing -- I would like very much to have their descriptions of their own lesson plans using this process. The best of these will be used in revision of this series and in the Responsive Environment's Newsletter.

Sagan, Eugene. B., Ph.D and Sagan, Juanita B., M.A.

Note: The Process of Good Teaching -- Creative Behavior Process:
Institute for Creative and Artistic Development. copyright 1965

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BALLOON FANTASY: A MODEL LESSON PLAN

A PROGRESSION IN LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

FROM FANTASY TO MOVEMENT TO ART

TO LANGUAGE (SPOKEN, WRITTEN, READ)

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INTRODUCTION

This lesson plan provides the structure for students to have the opportunity to develop a healthy self-concept and to help them develop their intellectual ability. This lesson plan is a model showing a teaching process and a progression from fantasy to movement to art to language -- spoken and written.

Parts of this lesson may be modified to fit the particular needs and style of any child or teacher, individually, in a small or large group. Although this lesson has been developed first for children in Kindergarten, it is appropriate for children, of all ages, especially children who are not ready for Level I in LEIR. Children who can read and write may use this lesson for telling and writing stories about their fantasy, movement, and art experience.

SUGGESTIONS

Before trying this lesson with children, I suggest you role-play it with the Program Advisor or another teacher. Share and compare this experience, adapting the lesson to your own needs for security and clarity.

I suggest giving a child the opportunity to not do the lesson. (In a responsive environment, this opportunity is always provided.) "When a child is given the opportunity" 'to not do', he may be able to work independently with a great deal of strength.[1] He may then be willing to join a group when he is ready, rather then being forced into it against his will. If a child is forced, he may respond with stubbornness, resistance, and resentment. I suggest helping a child to redirect himself when he does not want to participate in the lesson. He may observe others, draw what he observes, share his observations and drawings later with the group. He might also choose another activity that pleases him and that does not interrupt the large group.

"This should always be possible in a responsive environment. Of course, the teacher needs to set appropriate conditional limits that define acceptable alternatives. If the child refuses acceptable alternatives, the teacher will have to apply the responsive discipline scale. This scale is discussed in a general paper 'Toward Self-Discipline in a Responsive Environment'"... Barry Barnes.

1. Sagan, Juanita Bradshaw. Institue for Creative and Artistic Development, Oakland, Consultation __, 1969.

Before beginning the lesson, I remind the children that I prefer not to be interrupted while giving the lesson. I tell them that I will come to a group of them at a specified time. These reminders of "rules" I feel are necessary for myself and the children to minimize interruptions. When interruptions do happen, I have several ideas for "The Creative Use of Interuption." See my suggestions in papers which follow.

When doing lessons like this one, I suggest tape recording (audio or video) some of them to check your own teaching procedures, your responses to children and theirs to you. You may become aware of different voice qualities and styles. You may want to have children listen to the tape and share, draw or write their responses after listening to a tape. Playing tapes back and sharing them can lead to the discovery of skills that make the professional and responsive teacher. Skills for integrating tapes have been developed by Dr. Eugene B. Sagan and Juanita B. Sagan, M.A., at the Institute for Creative and Artistic Developemnt. I have been trained in the use of these skills and techniques and will help you with them if you would like. These skills can be taught to children as well as adults.

A LESSON PLAN FOR A BALLOON FANTASY EXPERIENCE

Materials

Poster paint: A wide range of colors, especially red and blue. Young children choose red and blue most often.
(Large Kindergarten chalk may be used instead of paint. If you use chalk, ask the children to use the broad side, so they may experience simplicity and space. If chalks are not available, I recommend peeling large crayons and using the flat side of crayons. Flat crayons are available from Milton Bradley Co. Many children do not like broken crayons for regular use, so I suggest having a special box of peeled and old crayons in the classroom).

Brushes: One-inch wide and wider brushes are appropriate for young children to express their movement experience in art. Smaller brushes cramp childrens' style.

Newsprint or Construction Paper: 18" by 24" or larger. Children need large paper to express their movement experience in art.

Time: About 45 minutes for all three activities: movement, art, and first part of language experience.

Size Group: No more than 18 children. If space is limited, take six children at a time perhaps on different days.

PROGRESSION FROM FANTASY TO MOVEMENT

1. Ask the children to find a space on the floor that is a space just for them -- a special space. Then ask them to close their eyes and to imagine a balloon.

2. Ask them to imagine that they are a balloon, an unblown-up balloon.

3. Ask them to blow-up their imaginary balloon in slow motion and to blow it to the size they would like it to be.

4. Ask them to open their eyes and move around the room, as if they were their balloon, taking care to move in a space that doesn't touch another balloon. Ask them to tell how their balloon moved, one at a time.

5. Ask them to pop their balloon. What happens to their bodies?

6. Take one child, whom you have observed, and ask him to blow up his imaginary balloon (a child who looks willing to volunteer). Ask another child to pretend to pop him, pretending that he has a tiny pin (to avoid hitting).

7. Divide the group in half -- half as balloons blowing up, half as poppers. Watch their bodies and listen for sounds that they make. Then change groups.

8. Ask the children to pretend they are walking with their balloons.

9. Tell the group that they will be an audience, while you ask several to demonstrate how they moved with their balloon, while the others watch. Ask audience members what they see, what does that movement remind them of?

PROGRESSION FROM MOVEMENT EXPERIENCE TO ART

1. Ask the children to close their eyes and to imagine their balloon and other children's balloons. What size are they? Ask them to think of the colors of their balloon and others' balloons. Tell them to keep their answers as a secret for themselves for now -- not to tell you or other children.

2. Ask them to open their eyes very slowly. Ask them to chooose a paper and to find their special space on the floor. Tell them to take three colors that they thought of for their balloons.

3. Tell them to paint a picture of their balloon or others balloons, or of themselves and their balloon as they moved.

4. Ask them to use a much of the paper as they would like to. (If the teacher feels comfortable, I suggest that the children be encouraged to make the sounds of their balloons as they paint. Sounds help them to keep their focus on their experience, and they are sounds in speech can can be used later to help develop reading skills).

5. After each child finishes, tell the child to put his picture in a place to dry. (I suggest flat on the floor in his space so that the paint does not drip).

6. Ask the children to clean up, providing sponges, a special place for brushes and paint.

7. I suggest allowing the children to spontaneously share their pictures as they finish cleaning up.

PROGRESSION FROM ART EXPERIENCE TO LANGUAGE

Note: This activity helps the child integrate his movement and art experience with language, dictation, and reading so he may begin to use and appreciate his own descriptions, essential for story telling and writing. It also helps the child begin to recognize and describe shapes, colors, and size relationships.
(See paper "Related Concepts and Skills").

1. Ask the children to close their eyes and remeber what they did the day before (or perhaps that afternoon, if you prefer).

2. How did they move? What did it feel like to blow themselves up like a balloon? What did it feel like to be popped? What did their bodies do?

3. While this discussion is going on, ask your assistant or a volunteer to write down childrens' responses during discussion.

4. Read the childrens' responses back to them. (Or save them and read them back another day.)

5. Ask the children to find their pictures and to choose a friend with whom they would like to share. Ask them to tell their friend about their picture. I suggest writing what they say about their picture on a strip that will go underneath their picture. You may want to put what they say on a Language Master card. I have found that children like very much for me to type what they say, read it back to them, and send a copy to parents.

6. Put the paintings up on the wall, with writings below. If you do not

6. (continued)

get around to each child for his writing, do it at another time, when you are not feeling pushed nor pushing the child.

7. The next day or so, after the paintings are up, read the childrens' statements about their pictures to them. (Or help them to read their own statements.) Ask them what shapes they see, what colors. Some of them may be able to recognize that one color over another produces another color. Some may be able to make comparisons between sizes. Some may want to go on and expand this lesson in another media (chalk for example), "Some may want to play hide-a-word with one of the words in their statement"... Barry Barnes. And perhaps some of them would like to write for themselves what they have said and dictated to the teacher.

DISCUSSION

The Balloon Fantasy is a guideline, a take-off point, a model, an example for any similar experience in langugage which takes place in the various learning centers and activities of the R.E. classroom.

The progression from fantasy to movement to art to language (spoken, written, read) is for a child in Kindergarten, First or Second Grade. This progression is based on a process: of integration and expansion.[1] A child may take what he has learned in one media (movement) and integrate what he has learned in another media (art) and further expand what he has learned in still another media, (language).*

Class words and books based on such experiences will be resource material for new sentences and stories throughout the year. Lesson plans for communication and Language Experiences that I will be sending you throughout the year will be based on this process and progression. I will also be sending videotapes for building language experience upon the following eight activities:

1. Limitations
2. Responsive Show and Tell
3. Listening
4. Movement -- Dance
5. Art

1. "Structure of Good Teaching - The Creative Behavior Process" ,developed by Eugene B. Sagan, Ph.D. and Juanita B. Sagan, M.A. Institute for Creative and Artistic Development. Oakland, California. C. 1965.

* "'Integration' here means - a process of digesting an experience into the newley expanded self." E.B. Sagan

6. Spontaneous Play
7. Cuisenaire Rods and other manipulative toys, blocks, and materials
8. Writing

I. DESCRIPTION OF A PROGRESSION

FROM CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE USING BALLOON FANTASY

FROM

FANTASY to

MOVEMENT to

ART to

RESPONSIVE SHOW AND TELL (see following paper) to

VERBAL DESCRIPTION to

DICTATION (for Kindergarten) to

READING or to

WRITING (First and Second Grade)

The following is a very brief description of events which occurred in the "Balloon Fantasy" experience for 15 Kindergarten children at the Ralph Hawley School in Emeryville. I will make the description brief as many of you have had this experience already and have received several papers on the "Balloon Fantasy" Workshop and my comments this past year. However, if any of you would like a copy of the video-tape or a copy of the specially prepared script which I wrote upon observing the video-tape, please request a copy.

I gave this demonstration lesson assisted by Carol Ladewig my co-teacher at the Institute for Creative and Artistic Development. Leigh Kahn of the Lab staff did the video-tape and Jane Pechman of the Lab was the observer, taking notes and giving me feedback afterward.

First, the children fantasied they were balloons. We gave individuals with'n the group, and the group as a whole, the opportunity to move like these balloons. They blew up their imaginary balloons in slow motion, popped

them and then blew them up again. Then we asked them to think of the color of their favorite balloon. After their movement experience, we asked the children to draw themselves and their balloon, or simply their balloon -- on 18" by 24" construction paper. We gave each child a limit of using only three colors of large Kindergarten chalk. The children reformed a group to show each other and us their pictures. We asked them to tell about drawing or to describe their pictures. We helped each child to ask another child to tell him what he saw in his pictures (see my paper on "Responsive Show and Tell"). Carol Ladewig took dictation from the children as they described their balloon pictures. These descriptions sounded like poetry to me and to other adults and to some of the children.

II. PROGRESSION FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION OF THE EXPERIENCE (see footnote #1)

A. Outline of Material for integration

Material is what the children have produced, as their response to the experience[2]. -- in this case it was art work and spoken words or written material, organized for use by the teacher. For the "how to" use of this this material, see the description which follow in section B.

1. Drawings placed in a class book
   a.) for review, observation, recognition, appreciation, sharing.
2. The poetic descriptions of the drawings typed on a primary typewriter, and placed in the book of drawings, with copies for each child and /or parents.
   a.) for review, teacher reading, listening, children reading, sharing, recognition, appreciation.
3. Audio-tape of poetic descriptions dictated by children and read by teacher, with instructions for further language experience.
   a.) for review, individual listening, following text, recognition, appreciation.
4. Key words from the childrens' poems or descriptions -- written on index cards, for each child to keep in his "word envelope" or on Language Master cards. (These words kept on cards in a child's envelope will be the basis for his words in his written and oral sentences and in his future stories.)
   a.) for review, sound-symbol relationships, reading, writing, problem-solving -- (individualized).

5. Photographs taken of children looking at their drawings and listening to audio tape -- mounted on pieces of construction paper.

   a.) for further review, recognition, appreciation.

6. Descriptions dictated or written by children as a response to viewing their photographs.

   a.) for further review, verbal description, dictation and/or writing, reading, sharing.

2. Sagan, Eugene B. Ph.D. and Sagan, Juanita B., M.A. Creative Behavior Process - I.C.A.D. C. 1965.

Note: "Of course, not all of these developments would be possible with each experience. However, they provide suggestions for building upon an experience. Such a progression builds continuity, allows for interrelated discovery learning, provides varied examples of concepts, and honors different learning styles. It avoids the episodic, fragmentary, gimmicky and unrelated use of a 'good idea' or 'handy hint' to 'get through the day' or 'provide something different'. Like fun, good ideas are not enough either." ... Barry Barnes.

DESCRIPTION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR

"HOW TO" USE MATERIAL FROM PROGRESSION IN BALLOON FANTASY

The following is a description with suggestions of how I further developed and expanded material which the children produced during their initial experience or Phase I.

A - 1&2 I placed the childrens' drawings in a class book, and typed their poems on a primary typewriter, then placed them in the book of drawings, opposite the drawings. These poems can be put into the book without being typed if the teacher prefers, or if her time is limited. I have always enjoyed sending home a copy of childrens' descriptions, both individual and group work to parents. This gives parents the opportunity to share in the teachers' and childrens' pride. I find that parents have responded with warmth and enthusiasm. They have become more involved in the school program and have offered their support. I also enjoy giving children a printed copy of their own work.

Seven or eight children within the group of 15 at Ralph Hawley School had participated in the "show and tell" and dictation part of the experience. Other members of the group had dispersed to other activities during this time. Still another group of 15 had gone to the school library during the time of the initial experience. When I returned to the classroom, with the treasured class book of drawings and poetry by the children which I had promised to put together in a book, two or three who had participated in the dictation, clustered around me with pleasure and excitement. I sat

with three children and we bagan to go through the book -- carefully, slowly, appreciating each page, each poem. These children recognized their own and others' drawings. Spontaneously they went to the other five children who had participated in the dictation. I read to them their poetry.

Several more gathered around. Some expressed their disappointment at not having a poem, though their picture was there. Some could understand that that was the price they had paid for interrupting the group by zipping through and had been sent from the group. Some children who had left the group to go to another activity, no taking part in the "Show and Tell" and dictation began to realize what they had missed. These complained vociferously and a few said they wanted to say something about their pictures. Some demanded to say something NOW. I told them that I would set aside a special time for them a bit later, because I wanted to continue with those who had participated during the experience. The children did not like being put off, they wanted very much to interrupt and have their demands taken care of. One of these children left the group and two stayed to observe, and were willing to wait for their turn. I felt good that I had set limits for myself and the children, and that those who had participated were first priority. Too often the "interrupter" or "upstager" or "wanderer from activity to activity" gets the attention at the expense of the participants. (Refer to my paper on "Limitations"). In this particular case the participants came first and those who had chosen not to participate realized that in order to get "the goodies" one

needed to be a member of the group and be willing to function within the limits or get "leftovers" later, or be satisfied with their choice to do something else at that time. Meanwhile another small group had gathered. These children had not participated in the experience because they had been to the library. A few of these stood with their "tongues hanging out". I told them that I would give them some time to share in the book after I was finished working with the first group. Two stayed to observe. After stating my limits and forming groups, we went through the book with care, time and attention. I sat on the floor with a few children at a time, close, intimate. I read their poems to them, pointing to each word as I read. The children began to appreciate the care and the work -- theirs and mine.

A - 3 I told them that I had prepared a tape for them to listen to -- their own poetry that I read for them. I handed each of them a copy of their own poem. The following is the script:

"Dear Children in Mrs. Lawrence's and Miss Nehbrass' Class in Kindergarten:

I am going to read to you your poems about you balloons. You said these words out loud, which tell about your own balloons which you drew with chalk after dancing like balloons. While you said your words my teacher friend, Miss Ladewig, wrote down what you said. Your words were poems for us, so I typed them for you.

From,

Mrs. Biestman"

1. That's my cat
A cat balloon,
Has a face on it.
That's my cat
On a circus balloon.

Gregory.

2. This is a cow balloon
A cow balloon
and feet
and hair
two little feet
his ears.
This is a head.
I scratched him.

Billy

3. It is a cat balloon,
It looks like a rabbit
with no eyes.
A blind cat,
a ghost.

Darla.

4. It's a sun balloon.
A spider
like that.
This is the thing coming
to bust it.

Shannon

5: This is a balloon trail.

Lorri

6. That looks like a spider
except go back and
make the eyes.

Dianna

7. A monster
who is black
and dark.

Zina

Turn back the tape and listen again. This time hold your paper in front of you and put your finger on each word as I read it to you. When your poem is finished being read, you may listen to the other poems or you may write your favorite word on a card or on a paper and draw a new picture of your word. Maybe you will want to make up a new story and tell it to your teacher or to a friend. Maybe you will want to make a copy of your poem in your own writing on another piece of paper. Maybe you will want to read your poem to a friend or your teacher, or your mother. Ask your teacher to help you choose which of these to do."

While these children were listening to the tape, I sat with a few who had drawings but no dictated poetry. One said he wanted to tell about his picture now. I took his dictation:

"My picture is a balloon -- purple and brown all over the place"
---Kevin

Another described his:

"A balloon.

I went "fffffffff".

I blew.

This child wanted to write his name. He wrote some forms and a few letters which I am unable to decipher. He had made a delightful description of his experience rather than a description of his picture.

At this point one of the children whose "tongue was hanging out" literally, said he wished he could do it. I asked her to pick out her favorite picture and to tell about the picture or why it was her favorite. She picked out two beautifully placed blue lines, just above the center line on background of green construction paper, with red streaking between the two blue lines. I loved the simple placement, slightly off center, and the full streaking direct movement statement. I took dictation:

"I see red and blue"

Stacey

Another wanted to do the same. He picked Gregory's cat balloon and dictated:

"I like black, red, green, orange.

Chris

He watched as I wrote, resting his hand on my hand as I wrote. He wrote his name, then a k, then c-a-t.

I was interested in the difference between description by children who had not been part of the experience from those who had. The responses from those who had not were more like what they thought the teacher wanted. -----Both children who described used names of color as their means of description rather than a more spontaneous, imaginative and alive response

teachers may want to give some of their students just one word, on a card (for their envelopes) and may give other children as they are ready, several words which they may arrange in different ways to form new sentences or parts of sentences. An example follows.

7. Zina's poem, "A monster who is black and dark" -- words on separate cards. A child may take out the words and arrange the cards in many different ways, new sentences, new combinations, variations -- "who is black and dark? A monster is. Is a monster dark? Black and dark. Black is dark. Black monster is who?

The teacher may ask a child to draw a picture to go with his new sentence he has formed or group of words. He may act out his picture with a friend and describe the action. The teacher may introduce, "What do you like about your monster? What don't you like?" With this kind of freedom of expression, a child may begin to develop his self concept, relating his experience to himself his family and his school environment. Children may forgot words which are in their envelopes. They need a teachers guidance with a few clues at times -- review of sounds, helping a child to remember his experience with sounds or his movement or art experience, may give him the clue he needs. I have used one method which I find delightful. If a child forgets a word, he puts it into a word bank evelope and may earn it back by having the teacher read the word to him, then he repeats the word, and draws a picture of that word, then writes the word. Children delight in this experience and very rarely forget

the word after that.

Second graders may use words in envelopes as take off points for creative writing and stories. They may write a response to "How does your balloon move on the page," or "If you were that balloon how do you move?", or "Imagine you are the balloon taking a trip through the air on your page. What happens to you on your trip?", or "Imagine you are the balloon and there is a string from you to a child. What happens to you?" Giving a child a strong focus for writing, from their experience helps a child to produce authentic statements and alive creative writing. It helps the resistant child who says, "I don't know what to write about." An instruction such as "write about rain", or "write about balloons" is too broad, for many children. A teacher may want to read "The Red Balloon" or to show the movie of "The Red Balloon".

She made a picture of a child crying, and hugged it to herself.

A - 5&6 Fred Simmons, a photographer at the Lab, had taken photographs of the children during this time. I matted some photographs individually on colored construction paper, but did not have time at the end of the school year to return to ask the children what they are doing in the photographs, however, I will ask a child from another school to describe these and return them next year. If I had had the opportunity to return, I would have written what they dictated. Older children may write their own description. Children love to see themselves -- they may help others to describe and label facial expressions -- all this a part of a positive self image. Words which children use to describe their photographs may be added to their word card envelopes -- perhaps pictures drawn from memory of how they

looked to themselves in photographs.

A progression in language, for use in any content area of the classroom in any similar experience.

I have specially prepared a video-tape -- my discussion with Sally Beckman who had wored on the development of the Art Center, on the Lab Staff, about the use of the class book of drawings and poems, and the use of word cards. If any of you would like a copy of this tape, please write to me, and I will be glad to send you a copy.

Note: Ideas which I have used have been developed by Dr. Eugene B. Sagan, Juanita B. Sagan at the Institute for Creative and Artistic Development, with further development and modifications by Margot Biestman in "My Kindergarten" to be copyrighted August 1970. Permission for Far West copyright by permission of the author.

POTENTIAL CONCEPTS AND SKILLS IN BALLOON FANTASY EXPERIENCE

The following is a list of skills and concepts which I have identified as potential in the Balloon Fantasy Experience.

Note: "Many teachers fail to value experiental education because they don't see the children developing skills and concepts they value or feel pressured to impart. Extremists favor the "direct attack" on such skills. Rousseau was only partly right when he said, 'Experience precedes instruction.' Experience can be instruction! Every meaningful experience is rich with potential for instruction. So rich, in fact, that the problem is not what skills does it develop but what skills should be chosen for emphasis. As the following lists show, the Balloon Fantasy has potential skills and concepts appropriate for nearly every child. And many children will select those appropriate for them. Some will have to be guided, supported and helped." ... Barry Barnes.

Since my definition of concept and that of LEIR and LEEC is somewhat different, I have prepared a correlation of that material with my own. It is available if you wish to write for it.

SKILLS

Correlated with LEIR (see pages 26, 27 or Teachers Resource Book).

The Balloon Fantasy Experience provides the opportunity for a child to learn to:

1. "Identify what they observe in their own and others' pictures"; p. 37
2. "Tell about things that actually happen to them, which are suggested by the pictures"; p. 37
3. "Tell imaginary stories suggested by the pictures." (To be developed from the picture); p. 37
4. "Identify a word he knows," (Tobe developed from his experience and later dictation, and choosing another child to teach his word to as well as learning his partner's word.); p. 37
5. "Discuss (likes and dislikes) " and some things children have learned in a lesson or learning episode; p. 37
6. ORAL READING SKILLS
   a). "Read own dictated words and sentences"; p. 28
   b). "Read some words and sentences of other authors" (classmates); p. 28
7. WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS
   a) "Use picture clues to help identify words and meanings," (to be developed from his dictated writing of his circle drawing); 28
   b) "Draw meaning from familiar background"; p. 28
   c) "Learn letter forms and names" (from drawing of circle); p. 28
8. ORAL LANGUAGE SKILLS
   a) "Relate thoughts and events"; p. 28

9. VOCABULARY SKILLS

a). "Develop, expand, and enrich vocabulary through listening to others" (descriptions of drawings, later stories); p.29

b). "Develop background of experience for word meanings"; p. 29

10. STUDY SKILLS

a). "Work independently," (and in a group, using the common experience of the lesson plan -- sharing different and similar experiences); p. 29

11. COMPREHENSION SKILLS

a) "Practice wriinng letters" (developed from his experience in making a circle, which is the basis for letters based on the circle); p. 29

b). "Explore writing, independently" (see above note); p. 29

12. COMPREHENSION SKILLS

a). "Follow directions";

b). "Remembers sequence";

c). "Follows sequence," (directions and sequence in lesson plan); p.29

13. CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

a) "Develop visual discrimination": p. 29

b). "Participate in creative dramatics";

c). "Express feelings and ideas through painting and other art forms"; and

d). "Dictate idea to teacher" (description of art work). p. 29

Correlated with LEEC

1. "Listen critically" (directions); p. 41

2. "Expand vocabulary" (listen to others talk about their pictures and/or experience); p. 51
3. "Use a variety of resources" (other members of class for feedback, also tape recorder, teacher); p. 51
4. "Integrate and assimilate ideas," (from previous experience at another time and place, remembering that experience through movement expanding it through art and language. I will write a paper later on the use of "integration," as developed by E.B. Sagan and Juanita Bradshaw Sagan, at the Institute for Creative and Artistic Development, Oakland, California;
5. "Relate reading to talking and writing"; p.58
6. "Listen to the language of many (other members of class); p.68
7. "Summarize" (group discussion at end of class); p.75
8. "Increase sensitivity to style and form (own and others, as shown in movement, art, language); p.78
9. "Organize ideas and information" (from focus on experience in movement and art, given by teacher with lesson plan); p.83
10. "Comprehend what is heard". (directions by teachers, checking with others, asking questions to clarify one's own understanding with another class member); and p. 115
11. Begin to tell "Stories" (from pictures). p.122

Note: My parenthetical additions to quotes from LEIR and LEEC are from my experience as a teacher trainee and teacher at the Institute for Creative and Artistic Development. I have used concepts and skills developed by E.B. and J.B. Sagan, as well as my experience in movement, art and language, and my experience as a Kindergarten teacher.

SKILLS

The following is a list of skills which I have identified, which are not listed in LEIR or LEEC correlation. They are part of the responsive environment program, which helps a child develop his intellectual ability and healthy self-concept (see Note, page

These skills provide the opportunity for a child to learn:

1. To integrate (see note previous page) his movement experience in another medi. (art, then language);
2. To describe what he sees in his art work by using comparison, a statement of similarities and differences, essential for story telling and reading;
3. To recognize a basic shape (circle) to be used later in art;
4. To recognize simple three-demensional form (balloon):
5. To recognize and distinguish his own "styles" from other adults or childrens' "styles." [1] (This would also relate to the ability to take another;s point of view, a basic Piagetian achievement);
6. To develop coordination, through movement (necessary for sports -- physical education);
7. To develop coordination through art (hand-eye coordination for reading and writing);
8. To begin to use his own language creatively:
9. What his limits are, and to discover what his alternatives are within those limits (material limits of paper, chalk, choices of color, as

1. Sagan, Eugene, "Energy and Style Sensitization," edited by Juanita Bradshaw Sagan. Institute for Creative and Artistic Development, Oakland, California 1968.

9. (continued)

well as behavioral limits set within the lesson, and the alternative of not doing the lesson, or only doing parts that he is willing do do, or feels comfortable about doing);

10. Relationship in movement space, room space, and paper space;
11. How to use other children as resources for feedback and information;
12. To make clear statements about himself and his work;
13. How to make use of a tape recorder (listening back for direction, learning to describe his and others' voice qualities, later listening to his own stories, and learning to operate the tape recorder);
14. How he can mix colors and what happens to colors through mixing, (Chalks, in this lesson);
15. Begin to grasp the concept of a circle by using a movement experience;
16. Begin to develop the concept of a circle by using art work;
17. Discover, and begin to describe size, space, and shape and color relationships in his own and others' art work;
18. Recognize the letter O (circle) and through discovery in his own art work, he may begin to recognize that O is the beginning of all letters based on the circle (P,G,B,D, etc.) (future skills to be developed from this lesson plan); and
19. Discover that what he imagines he can communicate as movement as art as talk that can be written and read (LEIR).

CONCEPTS

The following is a list of concepts which I have identified, which are not listed in LEIR or LEEC. These concepts are part of the responsive environment philosophy that helps a child to develop his intellectual ability and a healthy self-concept. This experience can provide the opportunity for a child to:

1. Appreciate fantasies connected with movement;[2]
2. Appreciate his own vocabulary;
3. Appreciate his choice and use of color. (This may not fit within the framework of the "standard" of esthetics);
4. Enjoy his drawing by describing his experience in movement by using art, as a media;
5. Feel so good about his own work that he wants to share it with peers and adults; and
6. Appreciate his freedom of choice to do the lesson, or parts of it, or to choose not to do the lesson.

2. Stanislavski, Constantin. "An Actor Prepares." New York, Theatre Arts Books, 1926.

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH LIMITS

REDIRECTING DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN TO EXPERIENCES IN ART AND LANGUAGE

By Anne Biestman
Third Grade

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Ideas and modifications developed from Symposium Papers." Institute for Creative and Artistic Development. Oakland, 1969.

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Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development
Level II
Date: July, 1970
Author: Margot Biestman

1. Two boys in the playground, throwing gravel at each other -- against the rules -- they could hurt each other. I don't like gravel on playgrounds -- asking for the children to hurt each other.

I have asked them to stop. They do not have permission to throw gravel at each other, but they may draw a picture of throwing gravel or what they would like to do with it. If kindergarteners, I may write what they say to describe their picture, putting their favorite word in their word card envelopes. I ask first graders to write their word or words, and second graders to write a story or make a rhyming poem -- "I'd like to sock with a rock." When children are fighting on the playground or in the classroom, I ask them to close their eyes for a few moments, giving them a paper and crayon for scribbling. Then I ask them to sit on opposite end of a large piece of paper and to them take a crayon -- the first color they think of when they think of fighting. Ask them to decide which part of the paper is their own territory and to mark off their territory with one line. Then ask them to begin a scribble fight, going into the other one's territory with their crayon. The rule here is that they keep their crayon on the paper. If they take it off, I ask them to stop. The reason for this limit is to avoid hitting, while giving the child an acceptable way to express his feelings without endangering himself or the other person. Then ask the children to describe their scribble pic-

ture. Early in the year, if this alternative is given, the two children who have had the scribble fight become models for other class members who may use this as a way of helping themselves in a similar situation. If a teacher does not feel comfortable with this technique or is not available to supervise, she may want to have the children fantasy the movement of their arms in a fight, and to paint or draw that movement -- or to scribble what they would like to do to the other person. They may want to describe their picture or scribble story into the tape recorder. A teacher may ask a child to describe how his crayon moved on the paper -- a kindergartener dictating, a first grader writing important words for himself, and a second grader writing his story describing how his crayon moved. An idea I have used with children who need help with writing and spelling is to ask them to write the words they know by sounding them out using class books or texts or story books for reference, and to leave blanks for words they do not know yet.[1] To avoid their interruptions when I am busy with another child or group of children, I give them a time when I am available to help them. Some teachers may have other alternatives besides scribbles and scribble fights for children who are fighting or being destructive to another child or his property. I would be delighted to hear of alternatives which you have found successful in redirecting children. I will print these and send them to you. I have several other suggestions of redirection techniques I have used and would be glad to send them to you upon request.

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1. Biestman, Margot and Ladewig, Carol -- "Basic Art Forms -- Lesson Plans." Institute for Creative and Artistic Development. Oakland, 1970.

2. A child, wandering through the classroom -- knocking over others' blocks tickling others, marking another's papers, screeching in someone's ear -- no focus except to bother, annoy others -- what are his needs?

   To give him a focus -- to help him use his energy to function within the limits of the classroom -- ask him to make a book -- to draw a picture on each page, one of him knocking over blocks, another of him tickling another child, and the third of him screeching. -- have him draw all the things he would like to do that others scream at him for or try to stop him from doing. Give him large paper to scribble on. Ask him to describe his pictures, write his words for him if necessary, put his words on cards, ask him to read his book to another child -- his vocabulary, his book can be a resource book for another child. You may want to use this for the beginning of a childrens' library in your room. Children's story books. In this way, the child has used his "bothering" energy in a positive sense -- he has been guided into taking a focus, functioning within the limits of the classroom, and he may learn to read and write from what he has done.

3. Children playing with blocks -- building -- another child begins to knock them down, to destroy what another has built -- disruption within a group.

   I have asked the child to stop and to draw a picture of what he would like to do to the construction -- "How would the blocks look flying through the air and landing?" "Draw a picture of what you would like to do to the children who have built what you want to knock down."

A child may be jealous of others, and he may show this is his drawing. Or "Draw a picture of yourself knocking down all the blocks." If a child is given these alternatives, he is learning to use his feelings in a creative way, without harming himself or others. He may begin to recognize his feelings, and how he uses them. If a child is unable to recognize his feelings or see alternatives he'll solve his problems in the only way he knows how -- hitting, disrupting or withdrawing. This technique shows him how to deal with his feelings in an acceptable way.

If a child refuses to redirect himself or to be redirected, I do not like to resort to further consequences. As a last resort I ask him to remain outside the group until he is ready to either draw or rejoin the group. If he goes beyond that limit, I must be prepared to handle this defiance with a consequence which he will respect. As a child becomes ready, I would begin by asking him to set his own consequences so he begins to take responsibility for himself and his actions. Some children may learn, "I will miss recess if I won't make a drawing of me hitting someone instead of actually doing it. I have found that children are often willing to help set their own consequences and class members are usually willing to help set sensible limits and consequences.

I have had a very rare experience in a classroom. I had gotten angry with a child who had not been willing to take the alternative to draw, as I saw him wheeling through the classroom, disrupting others as they worked. As the volume of my voice increased, and I raised my hands in an angry gesture, three kindergarteners piped up with, "Watch out Mrs. Biestman. You better go draw a picture of what you would like to do to _____."

I did as they suggested -- they were giving back to me what I had given them. I shared my picture with them and we were all delighted.[2]

At times, when a child is unwilling to stay within limits and is unwilling to be redirected or direct themselves. I may have to deprive him of some thing which he enjoys, such as recess or withholding an activity.

2. Biestman, Margot S. "My Kindergarten" -- to be copyrighted August 1970 Permission for use granted by the author to Far West Laboratory.

RESPONSIVE SHOW AND TELL: AN IMPORTANT GROUP LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

1

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Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development
Level II
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THE IMPORTANCE OF SHOW AND TELL AS A GROUP EXPERIENCE WITH LANGUAGE

The working of a group together -- a focus each day, with natural language to listen to, to act upon, to use, to learn from -- the first day of school sets the pace for the rest of the school year -- it is the here and now that a child brings and shares with others, what he learns about himself -- how he uses other for feedback and expresses his feelings -- his awareness and recognition of his own and others' styles.

"Show and Tell" is a child's stage -- the actor and audience working together -- a time when a child has an opportunity to show himself off, a time when others give their responses, when interaction takes place, when jealousies, put-downs, pride, appreciation are expressed. There is nothing more meaningful for me than a beautiful and responsive "Show and Tell".

Three problems of conventional Show and Tell are phoniness requiring participation, and the children who want to be the whole show, the up-stagers. Limits need to be established for up-staging. Perhaps some teachers feel more comfortable with a few children rather than large groups although I would let the small group "grow" naturally. I have always allowed any child to show and tell who has something he's brought for that. If too many have something for one day, I limit the time for each performer, or break the class into small groups, guiding the group to function without the teacher as leader. I have done this by asking children to choose the person who comes next, and that person, in turn, to choose the next. If a problem arises in making a choice, and we often solve it by counting to three. If the next person is not chosen by then, the leader chooses someone.

Many up-stagers, who make a practice of taking class time to dilly-dally about choosing are limited this way. The interrupting up-stager is asked to put his marks of interruption of paper, to draw a picture of what he would like to do to me for stopping him from interrupting, or to draw a picture of what he would like to do to the child who is showing and telling. This child may show his pictures after Show and Tell is finished. I suggest going very slowly, taking time - asking the group to help describe what is going on when an up-stager is taking the role of actor at an inappropriate time. Contrary to some opinion, children need definite limits (although many limits are unnecessary). Children are more willing to appreciate and respect limits when they discover their importance and participate in setting them. Perhaps the major problem of conventional "Show and Tell" is its monologue quality -- the actor not interacting with the audience. Communication is a two-way street and responsive Show and Tell is communication.

However, as is possible with various learning centers that provide a child with an environment offering freedom to explore, too much freedom during Show and Tell may encourage a child to disperse his energy, to dabble, rather than to encourage him to take a focus.[1]

Show and Tell should be a time when children can learn to take a focus -- when they learn to concentrate on themselves, their material, their power of communication.

[1] Ladewig, Carol. Consultations. Institute for Creative and Artistic Development, Oakland, California. May 5, 1970

of communication.

The setting of limits during Show and Tell prepares children for setting limits for themselves. It prepares them to learn to accept clear directions.

Show and Tell is a time when children learn to describe -- to ask the audience for help with their descriptions. Time needs to be given for a child who needs and has asked for help.

A child brought a drawing to show to a group -- a drawing he had done of a balloon -- I asked him to tell about it. "A cow balloon" , he said "What is it?" he asked of other members of the class -- they gave him feedback in the way of a poem, which my co-teacher wrote down.

"A cow balloon
and feet and hair
two little feet
his ears.
This is a head.
I scratched him."

Try for this natural development of sharing -- "not the conventional 'now children, let us share. Johhny sit here and listen to Sammy.' -- but the chidren being able to share -- really share -- like this child who wanted people to tell him what they saw in his picture. That was a beginning and I liked it. He needed help in description and asked for it." 2.

This child gave first what he had to give and was willing to ask and take more -- this is a joy for me.

Live, natural interactions should be a part of Show and Tell. A

2). Pechman, Jane "Observations of Balloon Fantasy Demonstration by Margot Biestman -- Far West Laboratory, and Carol Ladewig -- I.C.A.U." (see 1)

teacher may listen to children during this time, writing down a sentence from each child. Children love to have these sentences read back to them. During the first eight weeks of school, I made a collection of childrens' natural language during Show and Tell, reading back to them what they said. At the end of eight weeks, having kept these sentences, I took the children's simplest words, words that correspond to the Dolch word list, and introduced cards with those words into their word envelopes, one or two at a time. Sometimes I ask a question based on these words at the beginning of the day; sometimes I get cues from the children. Writing down the audience responses to a particular child's performance allows the audience to take as great a part as does the performing actor in contributing to the record of the event -- and instead of hearing he focuses on listening.

How do you get started? Ask the children how they feel the first day of school. Ask them to draw pictures of their feelings. Ask them to describe the picture. In Kindergarten and first grade write down what they say. In second grade, ask the children to write down their description. Have Dolch words (or a similar list) available for reference.

For listening -- the first days of school -- the first times with a group -- the beginning -- ask children to close their eyes and listen to the sounds they hear. Listen to the childrens' responses. Write them down. Have the children see if they cam imitate the sounds that they hear (one at a time) and to make the sound as they draw with dots, lines, scribbles. This is a good starter for any age.

COMMENT: Margot has identified what I consider the second of two critical steps in establishing a responsive environment: guiding the child to com-

mitment that leads to productivity. The first step is opening up the classroom, offering choices. This is often done too literally, mistaking license for freedom, chaos for humane control, trial and error learning for guided discovery, wishy-washy permissiveness for warm and supportive enforcement of broad but definite limits. Her terms are dispersal of energy, lack of focus. I would call it a squandering of resources, a wasting of potentials, the development of dabblers.

Unfortunately, the problem is just beginning to come into focus. How to solve it is what we're all about. It is a solution that lies somewhere between that of the Yogi and that of the Commissar. We are certainly not commissars and Margot reminds us that we are not Yogis either.

Barry Barnes

LISTENING:

AN IMPORTANT PART OF LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

"churr'te-te "churrr'te-te 'churrr'te-te

Anne Biestman
3rd Grade

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In the beginning eight weeks, set the stage for the school year by providing a strong focus in listening within a group. Children need to learn to listen in delightful ways -- with games that appeal to them -- with whispering -- with fun -- with secrets to tell later -- to describe what they hear -- with words, their words -- "Show and Tell" is a beginning in listening.

One of the first few days of school -- a new environment, new children, a greeting (new in the beginning is scary for some, exciting for others), lots of energy a need to focus that energy.

"I'd like you to take the hand of the person sitting next to you and hold hands." -- form a circle, take your time, move slowly.

"I am going to say my name and lightly squeeze Sally's hand. When Sally feels my squeeze, she will say her name and squeeze the hand of the next person."

Children giggle shyly, saying their names and squeezing hands -- one puts his head down shyly as he says his name, another sits outside the group. I ask if he wants to come in. He sayd he's just watching. I say, "OK." He's taking his time. I am taking mine.

Time for observing each other, different names, different squeezes, different styles, different children.

The introduction of names -- a touching of hands a contact -- the beginning of coming together as a group.

One child squeezes too hard. A need to set limits -- a child needs to learn that a teacher has limits to protect herself and the children in her class from being hurt. A clear expression of "Ow!" by a child -- and a teacher, "I get mad when someone hurts me and when someone hurts another". I suggest that a teacher might ask such a child to draw

his hand squeezing another hand, so that he uses his feelings and his need to hurt in a creative or acceptable way. He needs to learn that he may not hurt another child in the classroom. He may talk about why he wantec to hurt, after drawing.

All this at the beginning -- the beginning of listening -- or interaction -- of behavior which needs to be labelled, dealt with -- to set the tone for the year. I suggest that a teacher audio tape t's beginning:

> The circle of children saying their names -- different voices, different qualities -- a song -- a chant -- a rhythm, names of children to be sung by them and for them.

Have them listen to the tape. Children love to listen to their voices on tape. It had been my experience that children do not like to hear confusion and noise when they know that they are going to be "on-the-air". They want to hear themselves. I allow children to find this out for themselves: Some sounds are appropriate and are a part of a healthy classroom. Some are shrieks, unhealthy, a signal that a child needs his limits set for him. After listening to the tape I ask children to tell what they heard.

> They begin to label the noise and confusion, and begin to listen for the musical sounds -- their voices -- their giggles, their laughter.

I suggest that the teacher write the childrens' names on large circles which each child can hold as he tells his name -- the beginning of the reading of names, their own, which other children are listening to.

A first grader may write his own and hold it up, read it and show it. A teacher of second grade may want to ask the children to write their names choosing their favorite color crayon, and provide a large paper, on which each can write his name -- a class mural of names -- there is time enough for this.

Early in the year, a child may not be able to sit for long periods of time, keeping a long focus. As children begin to wiggle, a teacher may recognize a child's need for movement and may want to make use of the wiggling, giving a simple direction of "freeze", when it is time to stop. A child is then beginning to be aware of limits, listening for the word freeze. A child who goes beyond the limit needs to be stopped. He may make his wiggles on paper or go away from the group until he is ready to rejoin it. Time needs to be given for this, with support from the teacher and the group.

Having a bird in the classroom is an excellent way to help children develop listening skills. The children may imitate his sounds. A teacher may ask a group to stop and listen. I like to help children develop listening skills by whispering a direction around a circle, whispering three words at a time -- the old-fashioned telephone game -- the last person in the circle repeating what he has heard. I have also done this before going on a listening walk.

"We are going -- outside -- to listen for sounds -- around the school"

I give the children a time limit, and ask them to sit with their eyes closed or their hands over their eyes, listening. When we get back into

the classroom, I ask them to close their eyes again and think about the favorite sound that they heard, or a sound which they did not like I ask them to open their eyes and describe that sound. I ask them to draw that sound by making it and moving a crayon to that sound. Then I ask them to tell about thier picture and talk about the sound they heard -- to a partner or in small groups. I suggest writing down some of their descriptions or typing them, reading back what they have written to a partner. Some may want to draw pictures of what animal or machine or person they think the sound came from. These descriptions are so enjoyable that I like to send a copy home to parents.

7/20/70
MB/kk

BUILDING LANGUAGE EXPERIENCES

UPON NATURAL SPONTANEOUS PLAY

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*A child on the playground, kicking a ball -- practicing, his tongue pressed to his upper lit -- higher and higher, farther and farther each day -- an effort -- accomplishment -- pride -- a need to take credit.

To integrate his experience in the classroom, I asked this child to close his eyes, to remember the day when he first tried to kick his ball; then the next day, the next month, now, the here and now. I gave him three pieces of paper and a basket of crayons, the large, fat unwrapped kind -- and I asked him to draw himself on one sheet, kicking the ball the first time: on the second sheet to draw himself a few weeks ago; and on the third sheet to draw himself now, as he has just kicked the ball. I asked him to describe each picture and wrote what he said. "I can kick the ball." His eyes glowed with pride. A sentence for his envelope. I stapled his drawings together and put them between two pieces of construction paper -- his book -- a sentence for each page -- a story, in progression, his story -- he can tell it because it happened to him. He keeps this book in the classroom. He can read it to his parents. He can read it to his friends. They learn from him. He is a valuable resource. Children can come to him, can learn from him -- his words, his action. They may need his words in their own stories.

*Another child, a girl, twirling her body around the bars -- a trick -- agile she is, lithe, coordinated --a poor student, not interested in academic subjects -- no interest in reading.

I asked her to come with me in the classroom. I asked her to choose her favorite color chalk, and to use the broad side of the chalk.

* Biestman, Margot S.. "My Kindergarten" to be copyrighted by Far West Labs.

To draw a picture of herself twirling on the bars. She smiled, laughed delightedly -- her pride -- and drew a picture loose and free, unlike her tight, unintegrated, tiny, usual classroom drawings and writing, not copied from anyone -- she usually copies in the classroom, puts herself down, not believing that she has something different, something of her own which is better for her because it is hers, her material to work with. I wrote her description and she put it on the wall -- she can read her words -- her words describe her movement, her work. Later, perhaps, she may be able to transfer sounds she hears herself making as she reads from memory to others.

Two children on the playground, staring at a wagon wheel, spinning it between their fingers -- putting pieces of gravel on the wheel and watching it spin off.

I asked the children to come into the classroom and to close their eyes for a moment and to remember how the wagon wheel looked, as it spun the gravel off. I asked them to draw the motion of that wheel as it spun and to describe their picture. As they shared their pictures with others, a discussion arose about machinery and motion. Several went to the library and brought back books. Several others began looking carefully at moving parts of toys, and drew the action, and described their drawings.

Two children painting together -- a scene on videotape of a classroom in Berkeley during an art center experience. A little girl painting next to a little boy.

Boy: "What's your name?"

Girl: (gives an incorrect name) -- winks, and turns her back.

Boy: "No it isn't .... Love me or hate me?"

Girl: "Hate you."

Boy: "Then you want to kill me."

Girl: "No, I don't." (turns her back, flirts).

A play -- with words, their script. A teacher may read these words b back, the children have been the actors. From this they may draw pictures of each other -- they may learn to read important words because they are theirs -- "love me, hate me, kill me, name" -- live words with lots of meaning -- their own styles to be recognized.

Two children -- playing with blocks, making animal sounds, using Cuisenaire rods for dog biscuits -- dogs and cats. I asked them to close their eyes and think about their dogs and cats game. I asked one to be the cat and the other to be the dog. If the animals could speak what would they be saying to one another. I asked them to make the sounds of the dogs and cats -- a dialogue -- a script for their play. I wrote. I read back to them and asked them to draw a picture of their action, their play. Word cards for kindergarten, for first graders a sentence, for second graders a script which they may write -- the action for the play -- a series of illustrations for the action, and their words below a play, acted, illustrated, and written by the children.

I suggest that while the teacher is working with individual children or small groups in developing language from spontaneous play, the other children may be working on individual and group projects in other areas of

the room during the time for free exploration and discovery. Also during this time, groups of children may be working with a parent volunteer, doing special projects, or they may be working in small groups with the assistant teacher. A teacher may then be available to work with individual children or small groups, observing their play, and helping them gain greater understanding of and power with their own language.

7/20/70
MB/kk

MOVEMENT EXPERIENCES:

ENRICHING COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

By Anne Biestman
3rd Grade

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Author: Margot Biestman

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"Get in a comfortable position for you -- and close your eyes,"
a soft voice -- a soft, strong direction.
"Wrap in a blanket." (See page 4)

"Think about your favorite animal -- Think about what your animal does -- Does he move slowly or quickly? -- Keep your answers secret for now -- What does your animal look like? -- How does it move? Open your eyes very slowly." [1]

Ask the children to move like their animal -- if you have a particularly active group of children and do not feel comfortable having them all move at once, go slowly, take your time, ask one or two at a time to move while the others watch. These are the ones who can describe and give feedback -- e.g. "I saw you creeping like around a corner, "Your arms looked like a lion's", -- "You went fast, like lightning', "Your face was all scrunched", or "Your sounds were strong or fierce or you screetched howled, meowed, cried like a hurt cat." Language, live, natural and full from movement -- a teacher may want to write what children describe about one another, or tape record for the children to listen to later.

Go slowly -- take time -- have a few experiment at a time, have a few animals interact with each other. Suggest slow motion if the children are too active for your comfort. If the children appear to threaten you or each other state limits of no touching each other. -- tell them to "freeze" -- demonstrating this first with one child, telling him to move like his animal and saying "freeze" when you want him to stop. Listen for the childrens' growls and hisses. These strong sounds can be put to use creative'y by asking the child to use these sounds when he draws his picture.

1. Biestman, Margot S. "My Kindergarten." To be copyrighted -- August 1970

Be sure not to go beyond the limit where you feel comfortable, for the children need to know your limit, so they can learn to be free within your limits. If a child is not willing to follow the limits you have set, he may have the alternative to wrap in a blanket, observe others, draw what he observes, or draw a picture of what he would like to do to you for stopping him -- or draw pictures of the class moving-like-animals." I like giving these as alternatives rather than giving the child the direction to go to another activity, because the alternatives given will help him to keep his focus on the activity at the moment. Another appropriate alternative would be to draw a picture of what activity he would like to be doing but is not allowed to do right now. A child is learning to respect creative limits this way, learning how to function appropriately within limits, using his feeling of "not wanting to" appropriately.

> "Close your eyes. Think about how you moved. What is the first color that you think of? -- Keep that a secret for now. Open your eyes. Take a large piece of paper and a wide brush and paint your animal like you moved."

Some may want to talk about their paintings to each other, some may need to calm down and wrap in blankets, or talk quietly in small groups. These pictures may be done with chalk or crayon as well, being sure that they have large paper for them to express their movement. I have found that an effective direction to give is "Use as much of the paper as you can to show your animal moving". Ask the children to clear up when they have finished. Later, or the next day, when the paintings are dry, ask the children to tell about their animal picture, or ask them to tell about how their bodies moved. Take dictation for kindergarten, have

first graders write words, and second graders write stories. Keep the movement drawings in a class book with descriptions written by the children. This will be one of their art and language reference books to be kept throughout the year. You may want to send copies of their descriptions to their parents. I suggest reading their descriptions onto a tape, printing key words on a Language Master card, or printing their words on cards to put in their own envelopes. Also, I have always enjoyed taking photographs during a project such as this. Later, I ask the children to describe what they were doing from the photograph. I will be making a videotape of a movement demonstration in a classroom this year. Meanwhile, refer to my paper on "Balloon Fantasy" and "Progressions in a Language Experience." I have enjoyed offering a movement lesson for the total group once a week. Movement experiences are also effective in small groups. You may want to use rhythms of children in movement -- have them clap the rhythm, or move to a rhythm -- then close their eyes and remember how they moved to that rhythm and have them focus on just one part of their bodies -- their arms, for instance, and ask them to make large drawings of their arms in movement -- then describe and write descriptions, key words, and sentences. Or you may ask them to think of an animal they like and an animal they don't like -- to move like the animal they like -- to tell how that animal moves -- to move like the animal they don't like -- to tell how that animal moves.[2] They may be able to describe more accurately because it is they who have moved, -- have felt -- their experience. Children associate with their animals, they become personal. Through these animals of their fantasy, they may learn to know

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2. Ladewig, Carol, Riestman, Margot. "Lesson Plan in Basic Art Forms". Institute for Creative and Artistic Development. Oakland, California 1970

3. Ideas which I have used here have been developed by Dr. Eugene Sagan, Ph D and Juanita B. Sagan, Institute for Creative and Artistic Development

themselves -- the parts they like, the parts they don't like -- and they may begin to know and understand each other. Movement is a language, too -- a rich one.

Blankets have a holding, calming effect, prepare a child for an experience in fantasy -- an experience in movement, help him focus his energy -- later, to integrate that energy from movement to art with language. I like to use blankets. Children like to use blankets for holding -- when they need to take care of themselves, when they need to be held -- when their excitement is too much -- when they are too highly stimulated -- when they are sad -- when they need comforting -- when they have completed a project and need to rest.[4] Blankets -- to be kept at school -- their own -- a softness they need to return to. Too often parents and teachers say, "You're big now. Go out into the world -- you don't need a blanket any more." Children often are made to feel that they are babies if they need to be held or to hold themselves in a blanket. Blankets have been a very important material for me in the classroom -- not only with kindergarteners whom I ask to bring a blanket the first day of school, but with older children as well -- almost the first order of business. Blankets help children to keep a focus -- to put their energies in one direction.

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4. Biestman, Margot. "My Kindergarten," to be copyrighted - August 1970

Blankets help a child to integrate his experiences and to calm him down in preparation for a lesson in movement, or to calm him after a stimulating experience. Some teachers may find this technique a bit startling -- "old-fashioned" -- yet it makes so much sense. But I do not advise the use of blankets for teachers who do not feel comfortable with the idea. If you do not feel comfortable, a child will pick this up, will know it and the technique will backfire. It takes a lot of time and "getting used to" to use blankets effectively. Some of you may want to try it at home with your families, giving yourself a lesson before trying it out in the classroom. Some teachers may feel at home with this idea right away. If a teacher does not feel comfortable with blankets, she may feel better about permitting a child to put his hand on another child's back. This is also very calming. Children have a strong need to focus their energy quietly before and after a movement experience. It may be comfortable for some teachers to speak in a very soft but strong voice, which also has a calming effect. Another calming alternative for teachers who do not feel comfortable about blankets or physical contact is reading to the children.

7/20/70
MB/kk

ART EXPERIENCES: ENRICHING COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

"Art of Tasting"

By Anne Biestman
Third Grade

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A boy in the classroom -- making lines with charcoal, strong lines, curved lines, straight lines -- long lines which go from one piece of paper onto another, the second sheet beautifully placed, slightly off-center below the first sheet, spontaneously placed just there.

How envious I am of a child who places his paper like that -- the delicate off-balance that pleases me. This is an accomplishment for this boy whose drawings were small at the beginning of the year -- tight, constrained, disorganized -- he is not well coordinated; he cannot write his letters, he is not ready to read his words, he is not clear about his self concept. And this accomplishment is a big one for him -- he smiles, and twirls back over his paper, lies down and breathes deeply. I was standing next to him when he opened his eyes and sat up. I sat down next to him. I was afraid he would roll over his picture and change the placement of his papers and his lines before becoming aware, before observing his own work. I asked him to look at his work and to tell me what he had done.

"I made lines, lots of lines." I wrote.

He watched me tape his two pieces of paper together, as he had placed them. I told him I liked the way he placed his papers. I asked him to choose his favorite color construction paper as a background mat. He chose orange and both of us carefully picked up his picture. He helped me to glue it to the construction paper and found a space in the room where he wanted to put it, and I placed it on the wall for him.

His picture, his accomplishment, his pride -- "I can make lines with my hands" -- his work on the wall. A classroom can be an art studio for the artists within -- their art carefully placed with a mat board, his name

below his picture, and his written statement. Feedback from other children -- jealousies expressed openly -- "Oh, those are just lines." I asked others what that child was really saying. "Oh, he's just jealous because he wants his on the wall." A discussion of the picture by the children. "I see an O, lots of l l l l's -- hey, that's like a "lollipop." "I like it. It's big." A first for this child -- time to take in what he had done -- celebrating his accomplishment by placing his picture on the wall. I like to put childrens' paintings on the wall. They like it. I like taking the time to mat pictures. Children take pride in how the room looks. This room is their art gallery. Large paintings on the wall -- a few from a group project, a changing exhibition -- some paintings done after a movement experience -- some chalk drawings after an experience in fantasy -- some crayon drawings illustrating a story which a group had done togetner -- a class mural of kings and queens, on parade.

Sugar, salt, baking soda, baking powder -- on small pieces of paper -- at tables -- small groups working together -- a lesson in likes and dislikes -- for children of various ages and abilities -- Particularly good for the child who "doesn't like to do" -- Children like being given the opportunity to express what they like and don't like, and I have found that it is difficult for children to be clear about what they like as well. After lessons such as this, I have found that a child who "doesn't like to to" is willing to do because he has the opportunity to express what he doesn't like. A teacher may want to ask a child, after giving lessons similar to these, when he balks, to draw a picture of himself, doing a lesson which he doesn't want to do -- write or say "I like my picture because." In this way the child is actually doing the lesson or taking direction, using his feelings of dislikes in an appropriate way. He is functioning within limits.[1]

Ask individual children, ones who want to volunteer to be the taster-actors, while the audience observes the taster-actors' facial expressions. Ask one child at a time. The teacher may want to ask the audience to imitate the facial expressions of the taster. There may be some gigles -- perhaps giggles of anxiety, not-trusting yet, tasting of unlabelled food -- suspicion. The teacher may say, "These are some foods, which are in powder form -- some you may like, some you may not like -- none are poisonous." After each child has had the opportunity to be the actor -- if they choose to be, and each has made the faces of liking and dis-

1. Sagan, Eugene B. PhD. "The Not-Hypothesis" -- Institute for Creative and Artistic Development. Copyright 1965

Ladewig, Carol. Biestman, Margot . "Lesson Plans - Basic Art Forms" ICAD 1970.

liking, ask them to draw their face making a face of their feeling while they tasted something which they liked, and face of their feeling while they tasted something that they didn't like. Ask them to make the face, as they draw their pictures. Or for those who did not participate, "draw the face of a child you observed." For kindergarteners a teacher may write "I like sugar. I don't like salt." A first grader may write these words. A second grader may go on to write foods which they like and don't like. Ask the children to share their pictures. A teacher may want to ask a child to describe how his face looks on his drawing -- recognition -- recognition of himself, what he likes and what he doesn't like -- parts of himself.

Children often make sounds as they taste, e.g. "mmmmmm". I often ask children to make these sounds as they draw, allowing them to move their crayon to the sound -- spontaneously these may be scribbles of sound, and occasionally the children make the letter symbol for their sound in their scribbles. It has been much to my delight to find a kindergarten child find his own "mmm", the letter M in his scribbles, after making the sound -- the child is integrating his sound with the name of a letter which can be recognized, sounded out, and read by himself and by others.

flowers brought to school by a child -- rose and rosemary -- smells to use for art and language form "Show and Tell" --

Pass a rose among a small group of children, have each one smell it and make a sound as they smell -- "mmmmmm" -- "ahhhhhhhh" -- sounds can be written -- pass a piece of rosemary, and make the sound as they smell -- perhaps scrunched up noses, too strong -- "oooooohhhhhhh" -- ask them to draw a picture of

themselves smelling the rose or rosemary -- delightful pictures of themselves -- what they like nnd what they don't like -- these can be a class book of drawings, with writings -- another reference book -- science, art, language, writing. Some children who are not yet ready to draw, or who feel frustrated by not being able to draw what they would like, because of insufficient coordination when they are very young may draw the feeling of the smell with lines and scribbles -- let their hands draw the feeling of the smells. A child might say, "My mother uses that in cooking." -- a sentence dictated by a kindergartener, to be written by a first or second grader -- to be pasted in the class book -- the word "mother", a key word to be written on a card for a child's envelope of words, which she can use later in another way, in another assignment -- an individual picture of her mother -- a drawing of her mother cooking. A writing -- "my mother cooking." A second grader may use this as a take-off point to make a book of different flowers -- her favorite ones, ones she doesn't like -- a story to be shared. Time always for showing their picture to another, to a group to the class -- time to share, to get feedback, to hear from others -- a classroom can be a creative show and tell all during the day --

> a child's "weaving" from discovery box in the art center [2]
> "Tell about how your strings or yarn moved." "If you were going on a trip through your weaving, how would you go?" "Pretend you are on the orange road (string), and you are an insect. What happens to you along the way?"

A child may begin to describe his journey -- to dictate, to be read back to, -- a second grader may write his story of his journey. Perhaps a small group project in describing what they have done as a group, weaving material in and

out of chicken wire -- "my orange yarn goes across your green one and meets the purple one on the other side -- " children who are working together as a group, integrating their experience in an art project.

2. Beckman, Sally. "The Art Center," Far West Laboratory. 1970

BUILDING LANGUAGE UPON EXPERIENCES WITH CUISENAIRE RODS, ATTRIBUTE BLOCKS, AND UNIT BLOCKS

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BUILDING LANGUAGE UPON EXPERIENCES WITH CUISENAIRE RODS[1], ATTRIBUTE BLOCKS, AND UNIT BLOCKS

"You've built a magic staircase with the rods."

Responding to children's natural discoveries can lead to rich experiences in language. Or. . .

"Build a magic staircase with Cuisenaire Rods."

Giving a child a focus, a direction he can take--the excitement of color, the smooth texture of the rods, the different sizes, and the word "magic"--intrigues me, intrigues children.

"Who lives at the top of the staircase? What happens on the staircase? If you are there, where do you like to sit? What do you think about while you are sitting on the steps?"

An opportunity for language--an opportunity for children to tell a story about themselves--an opportunity to express their imagination, their fantasies. A teacher may take dictation from a kindergartener, reading back what is said, sending home copies. I have found that these papers are delightful reading and parents enjoy them as much as the children.

Read A. A. Milne's poem "Halfway Down the Stairs Is the Stair Where I Sit--There Isn't Any Other Stair Quite Like It."

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[1] Excerpts from "Cuisenaire Rods--A Diagnostic Technique" developed by Juanita B. Sagan, M. A. , Institute for Creative and Artistic Development, Oakland, California.

First graders may be able to copy their words, their favorite ones, onto cards and papers. They may like to draw themselves sitting on their stair of the magic staircase. Second graders may want to write and illustrate a story about what happens on their magic staircase-- an individual story book, theirs to share with the class, to read to a friend. A teacher may learn a great deal about her children from such descriptions--they may describe their relationship to themselves, their family, their environment.[2] When teachers respond to or give children a focus, they are helping the children to center their thoughts and energy on themselves and their own material. The direction is simple enough to minimize copying and dispersal of energy that often comes from too much non-direction and free play. "Build whatever you want" is a direction that may be too broad, too vague, too imprecise for most children. All children need limits within which they can function. Some children also need direction. Of course, free exploration is vital and necessary, but I have seen many children lose interest after too much non-direction. Some say "I don't know what to do now," and some are not able to verbalize their feelings so they express them in other ways. Some of these children have a listless, dull look on their faces, and others are easily distracted or move from one activity area to another, staying only moments in each--these looks and actions show me either a dispersal of energy, a disorganization, or nervous energy. A simple

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[2] These ideas and lesson plans are from "My Kindergarten" by Margot S. Biestman--to be copyrighted August, 1970.

direction can help a child to take and hold a focus. Of course, there is a delicate balance between giving too many or too few responses or directions. The teacher must learn this balance by experimenting with no direction, broad or specific direction, much or little direction and responding, increasing her awareness by observing childrens' responses--watching for the listless, dull look, the distractible, and the "butterfly child."

"You've built a house--who lives there?" Or . . .

"Build your house--who are in the rooms?--Where are you?" Or. . .

"Build something that pleases you."

You probably know we value the response more than the directions. However, you may not know that we value directions too--it is often needed as a guide. One day I heard a kindergarten child ask another child, "What does something that pleases you mean?" Her friend replied, "Something that pleases you is something that your eyes like."--A five-year-old's definition. I was delighted with her pride in her words, her concepts.

"You've build a haunted house." Or. . .

"Build a haunted house. What happens in the haunted houses? Who is in this room?"

Such directions can help a child develop his listening language, give him the foundation for his speaking, reading, and writing languages. A teacher might want to extend the experience by asking children to close their eyes for a few moments and to remember what they built. Ask them to draw from memory what they built--using paint brushes, the broad side of crayons, or large chalk and a big sheet of paper. Ask them to

describe their drawing--to go back and check their building--to check what is like their drawing, what is different. Again--kindergarteners may add key words to their word collections; for first graders you may add a few more words or even sentences; and second graders may write what they see as similar and different, or the colors, shapes, or sizes they have used.

Attribute Blocks or Unit Blocks with accessories may be used in a similar way. Respond to children's natural constructions or ask them to build a magic city--where would they work, where would they live? Ask them to describe their city, their favorite building.

I have found scraps of lumber from lumber yards or cabinet shops (pieces of wood are smoother there) especially useful and pleasurable to me and the children. Children can help sand the pieces so they'll be safer for use. I have given a direction similar to that for the Cuisenaire Rods.

"Build a safe place to be," or "Build a haunted house."

I have asked the children to use nails or glue to put the wood together--asking them at times to paint, and then asking them to describe their construction.

"Where would they be? Where is the safe place? What does it look like?"

I often ask other children to help with feedback--what they see in another's building. Especially valuable is to ask one child to give his woodwork to another child and ask that child to describe it for him. This poses an interactional problem to be solved cooperatively.

MB:ee

COMMENT

In this excellent paper, Margot becomes more specific about possible solutions to the dilemna "How much non-direction is too much?" Stated another way, "How much direction is really needed?"

My interpretation is this: There is a hierarchy or scale implicit in what she says. First, provide an environment with materials and activities that "turn kids on." Respond to their intrinsically motivated (natural, spontaneous) actions. Give open-ended, divergent directions and respond to what ever children then do. Give specific, convergent directions related to fantasy ("haunted house") or self ("your house") and ask questions based on children's responses.

The objective to me is clear: Get children to listen, speak, read, and write. Many will do this naturally, asking you to communicate with them. Others will interact with you if you respond to them and their work (play). Some will need direction, a focus. If they do, provide it.

Barry Barnes
ee

LEARNING EXPERIENCE WRITING CENTER

"Art of Beginning Writing -- Dots and Lines"

By Anne Biestman
Third Grade

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An active writing center -- a place to keep the childrens' words, their cards, their special word envelopes, containing cards, sentences -- a place where children can take their words out of their envelopes, put their words together in sentences, nonsense words together, in preparation for sentences and stories -- reference material. A child who has a word in his envelope which another child may need ofr his sentence or story is an important resource person. He may share his word with another, another may write that word for himself and add it to his folder. I suggest putting up word family charts for first graders -- some words from the Dolch reading list, and some from the "250 most commonly used words" -- This is good too, for late-in-the-year kindergarteners, and particularly useful to second graders.

A writing center -- an area to go to to integrate experiences from many other interest centers in the calssroom. A kindergatten child who has had an experience in listening, may scribble and write the sound he has heard, leaving later to recognize the sound is represented by a letter which people can read. A first grader may write a word which describes the sound he heard. A second grader may write descriptions of the sound he heard. -- his poetry.

An experience "Show and Tell" -- A child announced during "Show and Tell" "My mother told me you said my eyes sparkle." -- I took dictation -- an opportunity to write a word for him -- after he had drawn a picture -- "my eyes" on a card for him, I asked him to copy his own words. A first grader, a few more words -- A second grader, a sentence.

Or spontaneous language, during "Show and Tell" -- "Here's a space for Mark -- here's his name tag" -- words, I wrote briefly, read back to him -- a picture of Peter leaving a space for Mark, Mark sitting in that space, next to Peter -- a few words for a kindergartener, on cards, his name, and that of

his friend -- first graders, a sentence or to write their story of that one brief important moment.

An experience in the art center -- a few words "I crossed over my friend's yarn and found another friend in purple" -- words that tell a story -- a story for a second grader about his friend.

An experience in spontaneous play -- to write a word or a sentence or a story describing what a child has built with blocks, to write "I can kick a ball." His pride in his accomplishments.

An experience from using Cuisenaire rods -- "I sit on the top of my stairs." -- from a drawing. "I see three blues ones and two red ones." "I am in the middle of the room in my house."

4) Beginnings of stories, ideas to be completed -- take off points to be developed further.

A child needs help in telling a complete story -- a story which is complete has a beginning, a middle and an end. A child is not ready to read or to write a story until he can tell one, with a beginning, a middle and an end.

A child in kindergarten had chosen three of her favorite words from her envelope containing her word cards. She chose mama, papa, pig. She drew pictures illustrating her story and I wrote a sentence for her, under each picture as she dictated . The following is her story. Her original story needed chapters. There were missing parts. The audience and actors added comments to make the "chapters" more complete. The original story below is shown with out indentation. My questions and added comments

after acting are shown by an indentation.

"The Little Pig Who Pricked Himself"

I. This is the papa, the mama, and the little pig. The mama is yelling, "Stop"

because the pig was dancing a jig in his crib, and his feet were all muddy.

II. The papa had no legs.

because they were cut off by a knife. The mama did it. The papa had to slide on his tummy.

The mama had some legs.

III. The little pig found a tree.

The pig hit the tree. The tree ran away.

(There was some disagreement here. The first action described by the audience was that the tree was chopped down, then directions from the audience that the tree was not to be chopped down, that the tree should run away).

IV. The little pig found a spindle. He pricked himself.

He said,"ow!"

V. The papa got very big on his birthday.

because he made a wish when he blew out the candles on his cake.

And he got bigger than that.

And the mama got scared. The mama chopped him down again.

So he's dead now.[4]

4) Biestman, Margot. "My Kindergarten", To be copyrighted August, 1970 by Far West Lab by permission of the author.

A book for the child, with additions from the class -- her story, to add to the library of books on the classroom which the children have illustrated. This child made illustrations and I wrote sentences for the missing parts of the story. With pride, she stapled her pages between two pieces of construction paper and wrote "My Book", and wrote her name. I watched her smile as she wiggled, then settled into her chair and opened the cover of her book. She read some words, asked another child for help with words that she could not read, then went over the book again and again. Later in the day she read it to the class. Her book and all the class had taken a part -- in this, a production.

A word game -- with writing -- kindergarten

"What's your favorite shape?"

"A circle."

I write the word "circle." "This is your word, "circle." I fold the paper in half, like a card -- inside, I write, "circle, square, triangle" -- I ask the child if he can find his word among the three. If unsure, he may look back to check -- to find the similarities on different pages -- tricky, because the initial sounds are the same -- visual discrimination -- a time perhaps, to point out that the s in square has the same sound as the c in circle -- sometimes the c sounds like an s and sometimes like the c in cat.

"Draw a circle. Write the word circle on the back of the page if you would like." [5]

5. Barnes, Barry, Far West Laboratory, 1970. "Favorite Shape Game"

The child may go back and run his fingers over the letters of circle, he may want to go over the letters with his pencil -- a suggestion I have for the kindergartener is to ask him to form the letters with his arms in a large motion first -- and to draw or paint that motion on large paper before going to small writing -- on small paper.

I might ask a child to draw circles, on large paper and- color his circle in his favorite colors, asking him to draw the circles by keeping his crayon or chalk continually on the paper (to keep a continuous line, rather than separate circles. Or a teacher may want to ask a child to look at his drawing of circles and to choose his favorite one to enlarge.

-- For the first grade -- the same game, with expansion -- "Make drawing book of circles, long ones, small ones, large ones -- perhaps.

Writing words -- "I like these because: I don't like these because" -- circle books, square books, triangle books -- or simply "Ilike the round ones" -- or the oval ones, the thin ones, the thick ones.

And for second grade expension of the book and story writing -- "If you were an ant crawling over your circles from page to page, how would you travel. What would happen along your way. Who would you meet?" -- This after coloring their circles --

An experience in accepting limitations. "I'd like to sock with a rock." -- or after a scribble of what a child would like to do to another child in the block area after a teacher has stopped him from wrecking a construct, "my scribbles are mad and red." "This is a picture of me hitting you."

An experience in movement "arms dance wiggly all over."

Writing may be an integration for a child for his experience in one or several areas of interest during the day. Scribble writing for kinder-

garteners may be a description of his movement, sounds which he has heard, or it may be an integration of letters which he has working on. These letters may show up in his scribbles. When a kindergartener or first grader is writing or copying words which a teacher has written for him on a card, may be his integration for remembering that word, and what that word means for him. Writing for a first grader may be an organization of what has been important for him during the day -- an event which is meaningful to him. A second grader, in time, may use writing to integrate his day by writing events, as in a diary. In this way children are using writing to find our what they have gotten for themselves and what they have given.

Some children need to write to integrate what they have learned. By giving the child a focus of writing about what he has experienced is a way of helping him to recognize himself and his learning experience as a whole, rather than just a collection of separate experiences.[6]

6. These ideas have been developed by the Institute for Creative and Artistic Development. I have further developed and modified these ideas

MORE ON SCRIBBLES

A Warm-up Lesson for Handwriting

As a warm-up, in preparation for handwriting, I have provided children with a sheet of paper for each and a basket of crayons in the writing center. I ask the children to close their eyes and clench their fists, then to open them gradually. Some children have reported how tight their hands feel. I ask them to scribble before doing any formalized handwriting or copying of letters each day. Some children are able to observe and identify letters in their scribbles. They Have been able to loosen their hands in such a way that the writing of letters becomes easier for them, and letters which they form are more fluid. The scribbles themselves are works or art. Children are developing a sense of space and color and a sense of paper limits, as well as shape and form and line. I suggest keeping class books of scribbles, or placing some larger ones on the walls for display. I also suggest giving the children an opportunity to have experiences of making the movement of the letter with their arms, and giving them the opportunity to use their energy to scribble at least once a day. This is for kindergarten and many first graders. Teachers of first and second graders may want to modify this lesson by asking children to "loosen up first" by making a series of large circles first with one hand, then the other, then both hands. The children may want to use these drawings of circles in an art project, at another time during the day. They may want to use crayons, chalk, or paint to strengthen their statement of lines and circles with color. These drawings can be very beautiful designs and art products.

1. Kellogg, Rhoda. "Analysis of Childrens' Art"

2. These ideas have been developed by Juanita Bradshaw Sagan at the Institute for Creative and Artistic Development in Oaklnad, and further development by Margot Biestman, "My Kindergarten". To be copyrighted August, 1970 by Far West Lab, by permission of the author

3. Scott Wachenheim has written several suggestions, during a workshop "Writing in Scribbles" for Program Advisors in Berkeley, March 1970.

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

"WRITING IN SCRIBBLES"

A Workshop for Program Advisors

Berkeley -- March 18, 1970

By Margot Biestman
Program Assistant
Follow Through Program
Level II

FOR LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 1).

My first purpose in giving this workshop is that it will be fun for me to teach, in the hope that it may be fun for me and teacher-students to learn.

My second purpose is to give Program Directors and teachers an opportunity to have an experience similar to a child, in one of his first experiences in writing -- to give them an opportunity to discover, appreciate and increase their sensitivity to what a child does spontaneously.

Another purpose in giving this workshop is to give participants an opportunity to find out how children can learn to write and to identify letters through their scribbles. Scribbling is a child's first writing. I believe that a child is not ready to write until he has had a great deal of experience in using his large muscles through movement, scribbling -- and until dots, lines, circles, triangles show up in his scribbles. 2). Children may learn to recognize shapes, then make comparisons between shapes in their scribbles. Letters in our alphabet are made up of these shapes.

Children may compare what they find in their scribbles with letters they have seen and touched. I like large wooden letters. I like to touch them and move them. So do children. Children may

1). refer to my paper: "Language Experience -- a 2 Day Workshop -- Balloon Fantasy", Statement of Purpose, page 1. Jan. 1970

2). Kellogg, Rhoda. "What Children Scribble and Why."
"Analysis of Childrens' Art" National Press , 1969

learn to distinguish differences between p,d,b, by experimenting -- turning a wooden d upside down to make a p, turning a d over to make a b. A teacher may ask a child to describe the differences which he has felt and seen, and may label the name of the letter and sound.

Children are too often taught to write by copying before their muscles are ready. They are often asked to write by copying written models (made by the teacher, or printed on ditto forms), before they have discovered and appreciated what they can do with their own work.

Children often make sounds while scribbling. Teachers may want to use these sounds to help children develop listening skills. I often listen to the sound that children are making while they scribble, and write the letter which represents that sound on a child's paper. A child begins to listen to his sounds and those of others, and he may begin to recognize what letters are used to represent different sounds he has made. The sounds children make are essential for sounding letters, to be developed later for reading.

Children may describe and tell stories through their scribbles. When teachers ask children to tell about their scribble picture, they may see shapes and forms which remind him of something he sees in his fantasy or in reality. As he describes and shares what he sees, others may give "feedback" to him as to what they see. I have found that these description and sharing experiences are lively and give me great pleasure. A child is beginning to tell stories. A teacher may want to ask a child to tell a story about his scribble, and to act out that story with other members of the class.

She may want to write his story for him as he dictates, or have him tell it into the tape recorder.

I have asked children to fight with crayons or chalk on paper, scribbling their fight, rather than hurting or destroying property and themselves. I ask 2 children who have indicated that they want or need to fight (e.g. one child knocking another child's blocks down), to take a large piece of construction paper or newsprint (18 by 24" or larger) and to sit on opposite sides of the paper. I ask them to take 3 crayons each, colors that they think of for fighting, and ask them to move the crayons toward each other, using as much of the paper as they need to use, going into each others' territory (within the limits of the paper space). In this way, children may learn to "fight creatively", and have the opportunity to find pleasure and satisfaction in their fight as well as in their art work. I have watched children begin to giggle and find delight in themselves and each other, as they move their crayons to touch one anothers', and as they move, toward, away from, around, and through. When I watch children having a "scribble fight" I am delighted and join them in their delight.

I have asked "interrupters" in a group to put their interruptions on paper. I ask them to put a mark on paper every time they feel like interrupting, or I ask them to draw a picture of what they would like to interrupt with. They share this later with a group.

Children are delighted and learn through their scribbles.

MATERIALS

Newsprint: 10 sheets for each participant -- 18 by 24"

Crayons or Large Kindergarten chalk: If you use crayons, suggest flat crayons, available from Milton Bradley Co. or peeled large crayons.

TIME

One hour and a half.

FOR:

Group no larger than 20.

FANTASY

EXPERIENCE, EXPLORATION

1. Close your eyes, if you are willing. If you do not feel comfortable closing your eyes, please do not do so.
2. Think of a child, a very young child, a child whom you have seen holding a crayon, for the first time. Think how he is holding his crayon, how he is using his paper -- a child writing for the first time.
3. Think of the colors that child is using. Choose the first three colors that you think of.
4. Open your eyes very slowly.

ART

INTEGRATION OF THE FANTASY EXPERIENCE, EXPLORATION, DISCRIMINATION, PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Take 10 sheets of newsprint and three crayons -- the ones you thought of in your fantasy. (Or choose 3 pieces of large Kindergarten chalk. I suggest using large chalk as it enables adults to break up their small muscle training, so that they may be closer to having the experience similar to a child).
2. If you are willing, close your eyes and feel the paper -- its' size, its' texture.
3. Feel the crayon or chalk -- its' size, its' texture.
4. Holding the crayon or chalk in your fist, make dots on your paper. Make them as strong as you are willing to make them. Listen to the sound of your crayon or chalk on your paper. Give yourself permission to change colors when you feel like changing.

(5)

Turn the page.

5. Put the chalk or crayon in your other hand, and make dots in a similar way. Turn the page.

6. Put the chalk back in your "accustomed" hand and make simple straight lines on your paper -- no shapes or forms -- just lines. Change colors when you would like. Turn the page.

7. Change to your"unaccustomed" hand and make lines in a similar way. Turn the page.

8. Change to your "accustomed"hand and use lines to scribble on your paper, using as much of the paper that you are willing to use. Turn the page.

9. Change hands and do the same. Close your eyes, if you are willing.

10. Scribble on your paper, using both hands simultaneously.

11. Look over your dots, lines and scribbles, taking your time to look at each one.

LANGUAGE

FURTHER INTEGRATION OF FANTASY AND ART EXPERIENCE __ DESCRIBING, SHARING, COMPARING, PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Describe your experience or your scribble. If you were looking at your scribble as if it were a message what would it say?

2. Write one or two ways that you can think of for using scribbling in a classroom or write why you would not use scribbling in a classroom.

3. Share your pictures and writing with a partner. See if you can identify letters in your scribbles.

4. Move into groups of 4. Discuss your experience.

5. Group discussion. Those of you who would like, share your material with the group. What do you see in this experience that would be helpful to a child learning to write?

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